Minutes for Workgroup #174 – Informed Delivery APP

Session 27: 12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m. EST WebEx

Carrie kicked off the meeting. She reviewed session 26, acknowledged we have started working on resolution statement and encouraged workgroup members to refresh their memories of our discussions, making sure we identify what we've missed and enable high priority items to bubble up. Carrie reviewed the new agenda items: An update on the resolution of the Mail.dat file & integration with Postal One! led by Bob Schimek, a high level update from Carrie on the program national rollout vision. And if there is time, we will continue with work effort of the resolution document.

Carrie pulled up one of the change request documents for Mail.dat. Bob said for the pilot that is underway; basically the Mail.dat team hijacked a reserved field and allowed it to be used for activating interactive content campaigns for the pilot; that was short term. Now, the Mail.dat working group has processed and approved the change request that goes into the next version 17-1, aligned to be effective with the next price change in January 2017. This result is essentially built for more robust capability; introducing a new record in to the Mail.dat data set. RMR = Real Mail Record. Highlights are as follows: #1 and 2 fields represent the Job ID # and the RMR ID # that uniquely identifies the record throughout the data set. RMR Type is at the piece level for example using a PDR (Piece Detail Record). RMR content type will enable a link to an image of a mailpiece or a call to action. Carrie asked about the redundancy of option A & C – is it to allow for multiples? Bob affirmed, yes, the USPS requested it that way. And the "O" type is Opt Out, which was included in programming so that this functionality could be supported if the decision is made to deploy an Opt Out option. Bob pointed out that the PostalOne! technical specification usually has more robust definitions and the expectation is that the USPS would provide more detail about each field and how to use it. There are two new element requests: Start and End Date of the campaign. Template code was added. Again, the intent is USPS would provide more definition in the PostalOne! Technical Guide. There is now flexibility in communication and two mail.dat structured fields. It is essentially structured on the piece level. Wendy asked about the Presort Bureau mail, Carrie reminded her of the VISIO diagram worked out with the presort bureau sub-workgroup, so we made sure the USPS supports the alternative file. Bob pointed out that they often use the Mail.XML format. Carrie will follow up with Shawn Baldwin of BCC and/or Diane Kennedy of IDEAlliance to ensure they will be capable of supporting the 17.1 file changes.

Since RMR flies are at the granular level, the other change request enables campaign trigger start and end dates at the CSM (Container Summary) or higher level in the mailing. There were no questions regarding the files. Carrie emphasized that Bob did a good job explaining these otherwise hard to understand documents.

Carrie provided an update on the program expansion in the DC/MD/VA areas. The USPS will be sun-setting the old NoVA/RMIN platform prior to the expansion. Still on target for August 2016, expect some one-thousand 5 digit zip codes to be enabled.

Carrie then provided an update on the PMG NPF announcement and what a national rollout might look like, high level. USPS is working on a business case, development is underway. USPS has 10 sections in the template, includes categories like Background, SCOPE, Expenditures, SWOT analysis. They need another month or so to complete the template and to "vet" it. The various executive groups, such as the Finance committee, have preset monthly meetings. Anticipate presenting in June/July. Next step would be blessing to proceed or not.   If we get the approval, USPS will buy the USB cables and couple other components on every piece of processing equipment in the United States. We could acquire users after or during the equipment enablement. The rollout could be regional, national, or done by some other method. The final course hasn't been decided yet. There are things from the workgroup discussions that the USPS already decided to implement.   Timing is good for the workgroup to finalize its recommendation in time for USPS finalizing their business case.

Angelo said this week at MailCom, Randy Miskanic said the USPS rollout for ID would be before the end of this year. Carrie said she was not aware of that; technically don't know if it could all be done in the time allotted after the DAR approval. Angelo said that Randy M. had a new video on Informed Delivery that he shared at MailCom. Carrie said she hadn't seen it. She said she knows that Randy has digital initiatives in his group and will need to follow up to get in sync.   Angelo added that at the recent NAPM Meeting, Gary Reblin said he was directed to implement the rollout of the program before the end of the year.

We asked for an update on the marketing plan to expand the NY pilot subscriber base.   Carrie reported USPS has acquired the list for marketing and that they are going through the list cleansing steps. Aiming for early May to get email invitations out to people. Wendy specifically asked about direct mail plan; Carrie mentioned the team is looking to revamp the direct mail piece to get higher response rates.

Carrie shared that the system is stabilized (in relation to sending out timely emails). USPS is sending out 27,000 emails per day in 5-10 minutes.   There are two targets in this next marketing effort. Customers subscribed to USPS.com, about 700,000. Last time this group was invited to sign up, there was a 40% conversion rate. The other target group is the 5 million residents of the area & USPS expects a 2-4% response rate for this segment.   Lastly there will be signage in 500 retail lobbies by late May.

Carrie proceeded to the Consumer Survey. USPS sent the survey out to Informed Delivery participants in February 2016. USPS is compiling information and still need to do some deep dives into the data. Some of the information has already been shared in Bob Dixon's NPF presentation. The survey was sent to about 10,000 subscribers who signed up between November and February; about 5,500 responded. In self-reported demographics, ages ranging from 25 to 64 were evenly split and even 65+ is at 14%. Wide variety of incomes, 29% don't want to share their income. As you might expect, 42% live in apartments. 81% were satisfied with the Informed Delivery Program. 88% would recommend the program to others. 98% view the email notification while travelling. 70% say they are less likely to miss important mail.   92% said they check their email notification more than 4x per week. 54% check their ID email by phone, 13% by tablet and 60% on the PC (this number was over 100% because people are checking the email notification more than once).   97% reported being excited about the integrated dashboard (this is on schedule for end of May). 68% are excited about getting digital offers and 90% are excited about an Informed Delivery App.

Carrie is preparing survey results as a 2-pager. Not being sent out now as Carrie doesn't have approval to publish yet. Hope to get final version published by end of April. Jody asked is there an App? Carrie will double check if there is a team actively working on an App.

Carrie said it's not surprising that only 5% said they pay their bills through the mail whereas 45% said they pay between 75-99% of their bills online.

Tom McKelvey asked if there is a question that breaks out transactional from marketing mail. Carrie asked how you might pose the question. Tom said he didn't know exactly albeit to know if would be important to those stakeholders. Sharon commented that it would be good to know what customers think – it is important.

Carrie mentioned the plan is to conduct a follow up survey with the same group in about 3 months. Jody suggested we seek counsel from the Household diary team on how to ask the question and see if they are prepared to ask questions in their work product. Perhaps more distinction on the perceived importance of marketing vs. transactional mail can be integrated in the follow up survey. And perhaps if the USPS was planning to conduct additional surveys with another subset of subscribers, the new question could be used.

Jody found the question #21 from the screen shot of when she took the survey as a consumer pilot participant. Carrie looked that up and stated 30% said they behave the same way on bill payment. For marketing mail 16% more likely to be aware of the mail / more likely to open and 69% claim their behavior would stay the same.

Tom emphasized his business strongly prefers the Opt-Out method instead of what appears to be the Opt-In approach as communicated in the Mail.dat review.

Tom asked about a technical brochure about how to activate a campaign. Carrie said she has a technical deck and is working on a brochure/document. She has talked to some 35 mailers and she's afraid of how people might react or misinterpret the information in the deck, so she always presents the technical deck first and then shares it.

Wendy requested a copy of the draft resolution document. Jody sent it out.